

Supporting those affected by the Manchester attack

Manchester Attack Support Newsletter

April / May 2019

About the newsletter

This newsletter is a way of providing advice and information to support anyone affected by the Manchester Arena attack on 22 May 2017.

We would love to hear your thoughts on the newsletter, including your ideas for future content.

Email us at: support@manchesterattacksupport.org.uk

Sign up for further newsletters

Sign up to receive regular newsletters via the [website](#). Please pass on details of the website and newsletter to anyone who you feel might benefit from knowing about them.

Marking the second anniversary

A civic memorial service will take place at St Ann's Church at 2pm on Wednesday 22 May 2019. Although it is recognised that many more will want to attend, it has been agreed with the families that the service will be a personal and private event for the families who lost loved ones, those injured, and representatives of those who were first to respond.

As last year, at 10.31pm on 22 May – the exact anniversary – bells will ring out from buildings across the city centre, including Manchester Town Hall, Manchester Cathedral and St Ann's Church.

Manchester Cathedral will be open through the day on 22 May if people would like to spend some time in quiet reflection and prayer.



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Permanent memorial update

Following further consultation with families by the Manchester Memorial Advisory Group, a permanent memorial to the 22 victims of the Manchester Arena bombing will be located in Manchester city centre, on land between Hunts Bank and Deansgate, close to the Arena and Manchester Cathedral and near the River Irwell. The exact location is yet to be agreed and

further outline details will be announced once a creative brief outlining the principles behind the memorial has been finalised.

Professor Malcolm Press, chair of the Manchester Memorial Advisory Group, said: "We have listened carefully to a range of views, most importantly those of the bereaved families, about our

whole approach to a memorial. One of our guiding principles throughout has been to ensure that what is arrived at is both fitting and lasting. It is not a process to be rushed, but we are making good progress.

"We have taken a significant step in agreeing a location and we look forward to giving further progress updates soon."

Manchester Attack Support Group Programme (MASGP)

The MASGP is continuing to deliver local peer support group meetings for those affected by the Arena attack.

There are currently groups running in the north west, east, north east and Scotland, led by specially trained facilitators. Most of the groups involve adults, though some young people are also involved. The aim of the groups is to:

- Connect people who have been through similar experiences
- Share experiences and information, which helps attendees to understand and make sense of their reactions and behaviour

- Enable people to feel less isolated in their thoughts and feelings
- Share tips for helping individuals cope with loss, trauma and staying resilient.

The advice and resources include self-care plans, guidelines for better sleep, and tips for caregivers who are helping family members/friends coping with traumatic grief.

If you would like to know more about the programme or about any of these topics, please get in touch with [Jelena Watkins](#) by email.

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Accessing trauma support

The [Manchester Resilience Hub](#) was established in response to the Manchester Arena Attack in 2017 in order to coordinate care and support for children, young people and adults whose mental health and/or emotional wellbeing was affected.

It is still available to support those who need it and provides a central point for accessing mental-health advice and support. Where one-to-one therapy is needed, clinicians in the Hub work with other organisations across the country to help people receive

the care they need from services close to where they live.

The Hub is for:

- Everyone who has been directly affected by the incident
- Family members who have been affected
- Professionals who have been affected
- Professionals seeking clinical advice about their service users.

Survivor focuses study on aftermath

Rebecca Stallard is a Psychology and Sociology student in Scotland who attended the Arena concert with her older sister, Lorna. She survived the attack and subsequently returned to her studies at Stirling University in September 2018 to complete her final year. For her thesis,

Rebecca decided to focus on the aftermath of the Manchester attack and how the city came together in solidarity. The title of her dissertation, which she has almost completed is 'We Are Manchester: How does a community create a sense of identity and belonging following a terrorist attack?'

Tips on being interviewed by the media

Disaster Action – a charity whose members are all bereaved and/or survivors from various disasters – have produced a number of leaflets and publications based on their collective experiences and to help inform those involved in planning and guidance.

Their leaflets include one highlighting their members' personal reflections of being interviewed about their experiences of disaster by journalists, researchers and others, and guidance for those approaching people for interviews.

This leaflet and details of Disaster Action's other leaflets, guidance and publications are free to download and share, and are available on [the website](#).

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Kerslake Report progress

The Mayor of Greater Manchester, Andy Burnham, has [published a report](#) on how agencies have been working to further improve their readiness to respond to major incidents following last year's Kerslake Report.



Further reading

Ann's story

In May 2017, Ann Burke attended the Ariana Grande concert at the Manchester Arena with her husband Darah and daughter Catherine, and all three of them were caught in the terror attack. She tells [Good Housekeeping](#) how they survived and how music has healed their family.

Book: What is Terrorism?

[This book](#), by Atle Dyregrov, Magne Raundalen and William Yule, gives information and advice to help adults talk with children about terror and

terrorist events. Written by child psychologists using simple language, the book is designed for adults to read along with children aged seven and above, to help ease their anxieties.

How to Think About Terrorism

In this [online article](#), psychologist Robert Leahy writes about how to cope psychologically with events of terrorism. He outlines how we tend to think about risk, especially when incidents happen, and how people tend to overestimate the risks based on several irrational factors.

On the Psychology of Fear: helpful lessons

Science reporter [Brian Resnick](#) has [written about](#) how we grow fearful after a terrorist attack.

After speaking to a number of psychologists he summarises how fear can affect our thinking, behaviour and politics.

While highlighting that it's not wrong to be fearful – after all, fear is a normal human reaction that can help us survive – he shares psychologists' suggestions for managing the uglier reactions to fear.